

REMARKS

The present request is submitted in response to the final Office Action dated June 14, 2007, which set a three-month period for response, making this reply due by September 14, 2007, and with the initial two-month period for response expiring on August 14, 2007.

Claims 1-11 are pending in this application.

In the final Office Action, claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 62-74448 to Kitamura.

The Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of the present invention as defined in claims 1-11 is not obvious over Kitamura and request withdrawal of the final rejection.

In Section 3 of the final rejection, the Examiner argues that claim 1 does not define a particular form of "converting" that is to occur in each of the first and second converters, and could also be heating of a liquid above its vaporization point.

The Applicants disagree with this analysis. Claim 1 clearly defines that a flow of matter 4 is converted 10 by means of the first converter 2 and second converter 3 into a hydrogen-enriched fluid. This does not mean only that in each case a chemical conversion must take place. Rather, this chemical conversion is also defined in greater detail according to its nature.

Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 together with its dependent claims 2-11 is patentable over the cited reference to Kitamura.

The application in its present condition is believed to be in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the final rejection and allowance of the application is respectfully requested. However, should the Examiner have any comments or suggestions, or wish to discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MJS', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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